1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

142 Among the llaneros the Yaruros have the reputation of being darker in color than any of the other tribes. This may be due to their daily exposure to the sun, for I have noticed that forest peoples tend to be lighter in color than those living in the open country. This observation was also made by the early Spanish missionaries. Gilii wrote:

> The color of the peoples of the Orinoco commonly is dark, but somewhat reddish. It is true that some tribes, for example the Otomachi' and the Guami', incline toward black. But they are of such a color, nevertheless, that there is no one among them who can be said to be similar to the Negroes, whose color they abhor. Generally the tribes close to the Orinoco like the Zaruvi (Jaruvos), and the Quaquari' are brown; even more whitish are the inhabitants of the interior, and of the forests. Whitish are the Maipuri, some Tamanachi, and above all the Macchiritari, and the Oji.[1]

The most striking thing in the appearance of the Yaruros is the skin condition referred to by the Racionales as "pintado," painted. When a Yaruro is first afflicted, some patch of his skin will become dry and almost sooty black in color. This will gradually lose all pigment and become as light as the skin of a white man. Practically every individual of the band I met at El Buron showed this patchy skin. The appearance is analogous to that of being profusely covered with [146] freckles. This condition does not affect the health of the individual in any way. By the Racionales it is attributed to the habit of eating crocodile meat and crocodile eggs. The Yaruros give no explanation for it.

304 They practice no mutilations except that the women drill small holes through the lower lip through which they thrust bone pins. One [752] woman wore 13 such pins. She often used them to prick blisters raised by insect bites.

516 The Yaruros seemed to be ambidextrous. In a group of approximately 150, I counted 6 cases of definite left-handedness, but generally, the left hand is used with a certain amount of dexterity. In addition to using the hands, the toes are used to pick up objects; for instance, if the man wishes to pick up his bow from the ground he will not stoop, but will pick it up with his toes and raise it to the level of his hands.

The posture of the Yaruros is an excellent adaptation to the soft sands on which they are forced to walk whenever they are out of their canoes. Their shoulders are thrown far back with the chest

---

[1] Gilii, vol. 2, book 1, p. 34: Il colore degli Orinochesi, comunamente e fosco, ma inclinante alquanto all' rossicio. Vero e, che alcune nazioni, a cagion di esempio, gli Ottomachi, ed i Guami, tirano piutosto al nero. Ma sono di color tale nondimeno, che niuno tra essi vi e, che possa dirsi simile a Negri, il cual colore aborriscono moltissimo. Generalmente le nazioni vicine all 'Orinoco, siccome le suddette, i Zaurui, e i Quaquari, sono piu brune; piu bianchi gli abitanti delle macchie interne, e de'monti. Bianchicci sono dunque i Mapoi, i Maipuri, alcuni Tamanachi, e sopra tutti i Macchiritari, e gli Oji.